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From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

PCT

To:
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BY

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*Response*WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year)

21 MAR 2006

Applicant's or agent's file reference

7175-75397

FOR FURTHER ACTION

See paragraph 2 below

International application No.

PCT/US04/33647

International filing date (day/month/year)

12 October 2004 (12.10.2004)

Priority date (day/month/year)

13 October 2003 (13.10.2003)

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC

IPC: (3) A61G 7/05(2006.01); A47C 21/00(2006.01)

USPC: 5/600,658,503.1;248/158,159

Applicant

HILL-ROM SERVICES, INC.

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- ☐ Box No. II Priority
- ☐ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☒ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☐ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/ US
Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201

Date of completion of this opinion
15 February 2006 (15.02.2006)

Authorized officer
R. G. Santos
Robert G. Santos

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WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/US04/33647

Box No. I Basis of this opinion

1. With regard to the **language**, this opinion has been established on the basis of:

- ☒ the international application in the language in which it was filed
☐ a translation of the international application into _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1(b)).

2. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:

a. type of material

- ☐ a sequence listing
☐ table(s) related to the sequence listing

b. format of material

- ☐ on paper
☐ in electronic form

c. time of filing/furnishing

- ☐ contained in the international application as filed.
☐ filed together with the international application in electronic form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.

3. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table(s) relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.

4. Additional comments:

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WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.
PCT/US04/33647

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43 bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims <u>1-26</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims <u>1-26</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims <u>1-26</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO

2. Citations and explanations:

Claims 1-26 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3), because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest the use of an equipment support transferable between a *first* device having an *upper* socket and a *second* device having a *lower* socket, the equipment support comprising the particular structure of a downwardly extending coupler having upper and lower portions *respectively* configured for receipt in the upper and lower sockets, and upper and lower *locks*, wherein the upper lock moves to *lock* the upper portion as the lower lock moves to *unlock* the lower portion and vice versa, as explicitly recited in Applicant's independent claims 1 and 26.

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**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.

PCT/US04/33647

Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:

The description is objected to as containing the following defect(s) under PCT Rule 66.2(a)(iii) in the form or contents thereof: On page 5, in line 32, --2004/0199996-- should be inserted after "No.". On page 6, in line 14, --2005/0000019-- should be inserted before ", which". On page 7, in line 4, --PCT/US2004/33470-- should be inserted after "No.".

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